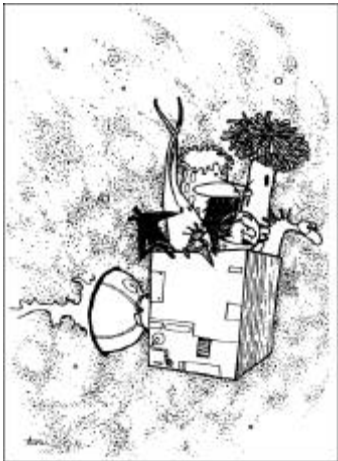


Novacon 37

Bentley, near Walsall: 2-4 November 2007

All aboard for Bentley!



With the thirty-seventh Novacon less than a fortnight away, we're going full steam ahead with a line-up combining all the best elements of this annual fannish gathering: contentious panels, engrossing presentations, plus all the usual fun and games in the hotel bar. In addition, we'll be giving away stacks of fanzines (courtesy of Peter Weston), forcing innocent passers-by to buy vintage science fiction books (courtesy of Greg Pickersgill and the late Dave Wood), screening oddball movies and enticing folks to enjoy the free booze we'll be splashing out on Friday evening.

Novacon Kaffeeklatches

We're delighted to announce Charlie Stross, Ken MacLeod, Ian Watson and several other of our guests will be making themselves available for "kaffeeklatche" sessions over the weekend, informal gatherings to discuss their work and impart experience.

Full details will be posted at our registrations desk; if you want to take part, ensure you book early!

Programme Update

Novacon 37 will offer a traditional single-stream programme, with a strong literary theme, as well as more lighthearted "fannish" items. It will be complemented by the artshow, dealers' room and archive video show (courtesy of Dave Lally) - not forgetting the central bar, which is at the very core of the Novacon ethos.

We officially launch at 7pm on Friday, although those who arrive early are welcome to enjoy the selection of short films we've scheduled for 5pm onwards. Immediately after the opening ceremony, our guest of honour Charlie Stross will be interviewed on stage, then it's party time - with free drinks, free books and a variety of special guests. And if all that isn't enough, there's our late night creature feature, including the UK convention premiere of the full-length feature *Frankenstein Vs The Creature From Blood Cove*.

Saturday gets into gear when Bridget Bradshaw regales us with more of her Stateside adventures representing the TransAtlantic Fan Fund, followed by the infamous Novacon book auction. Lunchtime sees our first panel of the weekend, as Dave Hardy leads a discussion on current trends in sf and fantasy illustration and the growth of digital art, then Charlie Stross takes centre-stage for his guest of honour speech (this will include a short Q&A). Later, our second panel of the day discusses the history, legacy and future of the science fiction magazine, followed by what is certain to be a heated debate on Britain's steady transformation into a surveillance society. The evening kicks off with our programme of the newest and weirdest in international cinema, before we unveil our special entertainment item (no clues yet, but we can guarantee it'll be one of the weekend's highlights). Finally, our traditional pub quiz will double-check whether any of your braincells have survived the Black Sheep and/or Addlestones on tap in the convention bar.

Peter Weston and Julian Headlong lead us down memory lane with their Sunday morning paean to the golden age of sf covers, then it's wallets out for the arts and crafts auction. Charlie Stross will be among those discussing the renewed optimism in British sf, before we wax both nostalgic and predictive with our closing debate on the 70-

year history of UK conventions and their likely path as they head into the 21st Century. Our prizegiving ceremony will see the presentation of this year's Nova Awards and the announcement of our raffle winners, then there's a brief pause before the traditional post-Novacon beer tasting and buffet (which this year has a Caribbean flavour: don't forget to pick up your tickets for both events at the registrations desk in the Quality Hotel foyer).

And then, we rest until *next* year...

New Members

as at 18 October 2007

154	Sue Mason	173	Mark Young
155	Peter Wright	174	Eddie Cochrane
156	Anne-Marie Wright	175	Harry Payne
157	Tony Keen	176	Omega
158	Kate Bodley	177	Hal Payne
159	Andy Sawyer	178	Jodie Payne
160	Julia Daly	179	Benjamas Chuachai
161	Nick Mills	180	Wendy Graham
162	June Strachan	181	Dave Cox
163	Ken Slater	182	Ian Allwyn
164	Susie Haynes	183	Dave Langford
165	Marcus Rowland	184	Liam Proven
166	Margaret Austin	185	Ped Badlan
167	Martin Easterbrook	186	Richard Standage
168	Malcolm Davies	187	Helena Bowles
169	Kate Solomon	188	Danesh Standage-Bowles
170	Duncan MacGregor	189	Magdalen Standage-Bowles
171	Dave Hutchinson	190	Michael Slater
172	Bogna Hutchinson	191	Marcia Slater

70 Years of British Science Fiction Conventions

1979-87 by Mark Plummer

In part two of this series, Peter Weston quoted Rob Hansen's view that the 1979 Worldcon was "the culmination of everything that had occurred in British fandom in the 1970s". It was also, arguably, the break-point between the decade of the fanzine and the decade of the convention. Had Peter and I chosen to cast this series as a fantasy trilogy - all four parts of it - this instalment might have been called *The Coming of the Conrunners*.

Earlier chapters have set out how for many years the British national convention was a solitary annual date on the calendar, joined only by the once-a-decade manifestation of a British Worldcon. In 1971, Britain gained its second annual convention in Novacon, but the fannish diaries remained relatively uncluttered.

The first British *Star Trek* convention took place in 1974, although its successors and other primarily media-based events, whether single-topic or multi-media, are largely outside the scope of the article. Faancon, a low-key fannish relaxacon, joined the roster in 1976, as did the similar if more structured Silicon, and both became regular events. although in each case they were designed for memberships of fewer than 100. And in 1978, Scotland gained its first convention in the form of Faircon. which drew some 350 people, many of whom were locals and first-timers, and attracted enough interest to justifying doing it again in 1979, a month before Seacon '79. After the 1979 worldcon, though, fans suddenly had far more opportunities to get together with their friends for the weekend.

The first of these was the low-key Polycon, a self-styled 'Shoestring Con', at Hatfield Polytechnic that October, with Ken Bulmer and Matt Irvine as guests of honour. Novacon 9 (Goh, Chris Priest) was the first hotel-based convention post-Seacon, with attendance (290) actually down slightly on the previous year, whilst only 40 or so people attended the fifth Faancon in Cambridge in February 1980.

A couple of months later, the Eastercon went to Scotland for the first time. Albacon in Glasgow featured Colin Kapp and Jim Barker as

guests of honour, alongside a less expected appearance from Patrick Moore. Experienced convention goers had expressed concerns about poor advance communication and planning, but, as is so often the case, everything was fine on the day. Reports speak highly of the fan room run by Barker and Jimmy Robertson, although that may be in part a reflection of the kind of people who write up conventions.

The summer of 1980 saw the first Unicon at Keele University, with guests including Harry Harrison and Peter Roberts, and attendees seem to have been somewhat less horrified by the campus conditions than they were at the Mancon 5 Eastercon five years earlier. Unicon was also to become an annual event, much like Silicon which had its fourth outing in August (Kev Smith succinctly summarised the football match for *Ansible* #12: “We lost”), whilst another new college-based event appeared in September at the University of East Anglia: Anglicon, with Brian Stableford and Lionel Fanthorpe. Glasgow, having clearly taken to this convention lark, played host to Hitchercon, the first *Hitch-Hiker’s Guide to the Galaxy* convention, while the year was rounded off -- after a second Polycon at Hatfield in October -- with the tenth Novacon, Brian Aldiss and nearly 500 attendees making it easily the biggest entry to date. An interesting trivia point from Dave Langford in *Ansible* #14: “Good use this year was made of a badge machine, producing permanent metal con badges which, for a UK con, must be an all-time best.”

1981 saw the second Leeds Eastercon, Yorcon II, with guests Tom Disch, Dave Langford and Ian Watson. Linda Strickler, writing in *Matrix* #36, describes the convention as ranging from a panel on should sf support causes (in which Ian Watson nearly provoked a riot by calling for a vote on whether convention members supported unilateral nuclear disarmament), through to a disco featuring “16 stone of Disch gyrating with a miniature Ian Watson” and the presentation of an Easter egg to John Clute for “best person dressed as a critic”. Rob Hansen, though, notes that some felt the convention was too relaxed and under-programmed. It also made what at the time seemed a reasonably large profit which, in a contentious move, was used to help fund the setting-up of *Interzone*.

The Summer of 1981 was even busier than 1980. After another minimalist Hatfield convention in May the focus moved to Birmingham: the Brum Group held a 10th anniversary party in June and the city also hosted Fantasycon VII in July, although the latter drew only

60-odd members; Babelcon, a projected local *Hitchhiker’s* convention, collapsed through lack of take-up. Faircon was back in Glasgow in July, with John Brunner and Ken Slater, and the first Becon drew 150-odd people to Basildon at the beginning of August. Joseph Nicholas described it in *Ansible* #20 as “a generally relaxed, enjoyable, low-key con” and wondered why so many London-area fans were absent. The answer may lie in Chris Hughes’s *Ansible* #21 comment on the second Anglicon in September, where Ian Watson and John Sladek only drew 45 people: “Too many cons”.

Unicon was back in September, too, again at Keele and with guests John Sladek and Alan Dorey it managed a respectable 195 people, which was still 50 down on its first year. Membership numbers also dipped for Novacon 11 with Bob Shaw as GoH, and one final convention squeezed in before the year’s end: Cymrucon in Cardiff, the first Welsh convention.

1982 kicked off with the seventh low-key Faancon in Oxford; the series was to dissolve into apathy in the following year. The Eastercon iwas held in Brighton, styled Channelcon, with guests Angela Carter and John Sladek, and a largely female committee (which was considerably more notable then than it would be now). Judith Hanna describes the 800-person convention in *Ansible* #26, from “Angela Carter’s GoH speech exulting in the disreputability and freedom she found in the genristic ghetto of sf where people actually read for enjoyment rather than with morbid snobbery” to “the TAFF duel where Kev Smith and Rog Peyton competed to read a book, sell a book and then sell each other”, while “[a] sort of deja vu nostalgia for ’79 seemed to permeate natives’ perception of Channelcon as it went on around them”. Rob Hansen also notes the convention’s role in creating the British apa boom of the mid-1980s: the Women’s Periodical (TWP) was born out of the ‘Women in Fandom’ meeting. The bidding for the 1983 Eastercon -- then still on a one-year cycle -- saw a close run race between a south-east Metrocon and a Glasgow Albacon with the latter winning narrowly.

But before we get to that, first there was the usual array of smaller summer events, some of which may now only be remembered in the convention listings in *Ansible* and *Matrix*. Lexicon was listed for a Leicester venue in May, but its £8 membership fee was criticised as excessive and it seemingly never happened through lack of take-up (although the name was to resurface for a Unicon in 2000, while the

venue hosted Year of the Teledu earlier this year). I missed Colnecon in June, even though it was in my home town; Garry Kilworth was GoH and it apparently still made money despite a poor turnout. Fantasycon VII in July re-branded itself Mythcon and Chris Morgan, writing in *Ansible* #27, advised us to “watch out for talented newcomer Sue Mason, who won a prize for best amateur artist”.

More than 400 people went to Glasgow’s fourth Faircon later in the same month, while August’s Galileocon -- a *Star Trek* convention, but featuring guests Theodore Sturgeon and Judy Blish -- ran in the same city and on the same weekend as Silicon 6. There had been some reports that there wouldn’t be a third Unicon at Keele, but it went ahead in September with guests Richard Cowper and Leroy Kettle, while the following month, 200 people went to Fencon in Cambridge and Hatfield held its fourth Shoestringcon.

The year ended with Novacon 12 and Cymrucon 2, and this article is starting to read like football results.

Even with all the new conventions starting in the first years of the decade, virgin convention turf remained. Ra Con in February 1983 was the first Edinburgh convention, and indeed the first Scottish convention outside Glasgow, which in turn hosted its second Eastercon that year. Albacon II -- originally the Albacon name was used for Eastercons and Faircon for non-Easter Glasgow conventions -- featured Marion Zimmer Bradley (a last-minute substitution for Tanith Lee), James White and TAFF winner Avedon Carol. Mal Ashworth, writing in *Ansible* #33, noted: “The good news was that cheap food was available almost continually in the hotel, as was good and reasonably priced real ale. The bad news was that the food was so staggeringly awful that even the hotel staff gave up and didn’t bother to cook most of it, while the beer ran out on Saturday night.” He also noted the eminent and legendary Peter Weston’s masquerade entry, where Jophan’s Shield of Umor baffled just about everybody in the room (I believe Peter may have written a book in which he also describes this scene). Avedon Carol wrote (also in *Ansible* #33): “...everyone was really just absolutely triffic and you see if I write my TAFF report right now it will be all mushy and effusive and even maudlin and not very funny and -- shit, now I know why no one ever finishes a TAFF report.”

Ansible #21 had quoted committee member Jon Cowie as saying “there will not be a Beccon 2”, and Beccon 2 duly happened in July

with guest Ken Bulmer. Christina Lake wrote, in *Matrix* #49, of how “I wasn’t prepared for the sheer reality of arriving in a convention where everybody I’ve ever known appeared to be present”. Unicon 4 in September saw the convention break free of Keele and foray to Colchester with guests Ken Slater, Garry Kilworth and Angela Carter, while Silicon made it to the grand old age of seven. Invention was a new -- and, as it proved, one-off -- convention in Glasgow, while Birmingham stacked up in successive months Mythcon II (September), Fantasycon VIII (October), and Novacon 13 (November), the last in the Royal Angus Hotel for the fifth successive year. There was a third Cymrucon in Cardiff too, but the most momentous news to come out of the tail-end of 1983 was that a provisional ‘Britain in 1987’ worldcon committee had been formed, taking over 100 pre-supporting memberships and preparing to bid in Australia in 1985 (which seems alarmingly short-notice by modern standards).

1984 had a gentle start with the first of many one-day Picocons at Imperial College, London, in February “which broke new ground in GoH conscription by announcing putative guests and later giving them a nice surprise by telling them they were guests” (*Ansible* #38), and then came the big one, Seacon ’84 in Brighton, the first combined Eastercon and Eurocon. This event had had a controversial history. Mike Scott, in his ‘Eastercon Wars’ article in *Zorn* #1 (1995) characterised its selection over the rival 1984con bid as “the first engagements in the ideological struggle that was to dominate Eastercon bidding and running for much of the eighties” (I suspect that the 1982 bidding session also displayed a similar ideological split), and the different rotation rules for Eurocons and Eastercons meant that the committee had to be successful in their Eurocon bid one year before they could bid for the Eastercon. But Seacon ’84 -- even the name was controversial -- happened, with an international guest list of Pierre Barbet, Waldemar Kumming, Josef Nesvadba, Chris Priest and Roger Zelazny and somewhere in the order of 1,700 fans making it by far the biggest Eastercon ever. Eve Harvey wrote about it in *Matrix* #53, praising some aspects, such as Bob Shaw’s (tenth) serious scientific talk, while being critical of the excessive fannish security. Rob Hansen suggests that the convention was well-received amongst first-time attendees, but less so among experienced congoers. Dave Langford (in *Ansible* #39) said, “Seacon was all things to

all fans”, while noting that ‘written reportage [had] been overwhelmingly negative’.

Tynecon II: the Mexican (the original Tynecon had been the much-praised 1974 Eastercon) took its name from a discussion at the 1982 Eastercon, and was a fusion of ideas from London and Newcastle fans. It was unjustly criticised for being elitist right from the start (see *Ansible* #38), but was widely lauded by attendees as a tremendous success, with unusual yet entertaining guests in the form of Russell Hoban and Alasdair Gray and challenging programming. There were, inevitably, calls to do it all again.

Glasgow had a confused summer with two conventions, Albacon '84 and Faircon '84, seemingly vying for the same weekend. Faircon didn't stay the distance and Albacon promised Harlan Ellison, although he was unable to attend, so Norman Spinrad was a last-minute substitute. Oxcon was Oxford's first college convention, and also Unicon 5, claiming the same August bank holiday weekend as the eighth Silicon, while Cymrucon moved itself to the weekend before Novacon, leaving Novacon 14, with guest Rob Holdstock, to close off the year.

Siliclone (the clue is in the name) in Edinburgh was a February warm-up act before 1985's main event. Yorcon III took the Eastercon back to Leeds -- astute readers may be beginning to spot a certain recurrence of 1980s Eastercon venues -- with guests Gregory Benford and Linda Pickersgill, and a split -site convention with fannish and literary programming in one hotel and media programming in another. This solution to the problem of increased numbers nevertheless provoked outrage. Still, Dave Langford enjoyed it (*Ansible* #43), while noting the way that “The usual feeling that All The Action Is Somewhere Else was amplified by the provision of an actual, oppressive Somewhere Else in the form of a second hotel”, whilst Dave Hodson in *Matrix* #58 described an enthusiastic aspiring author “[running] around the convention like a dog with its tail on fire trying to find publishers' agents on whom to foist the huge manuscript of a trilogy of SF novels he'd written, typed, revised, and printed and bound in a spare ten minutes before lunch.” I wonder whatever happened to Charles Stross?

Lazlar Lyricon was a *Hitch-Hiker* convention in Birmingham in May, and the first of what Chris Tregenza has characterised as the ‘fun-cons’, which would be much in evidence in the late eighties and early

nineties. The third Becon -- Becon '85 -- brought Richard Cowper to Basildon in July, and in the same month Albacon '85 finally imported Harlan Ellison to Glasgow. The ninth and final outing for Silicon filled the August bank holiday weekend in Newcastle, even as runners bearing dispatches in forked sticks brought back the news from Aussiecon Two that Britain had won the Worldcon and that Brighton would play host to Conspiracy '87 two years hence.

The Fantasycon was again in Birmingham during September, its flyers noting that it “[has] gained the reputation of ‘The Professionals’ Convention””, and Camcon was the Unicon in Cambridge in the same month, with Articon, another Hatfield ‘Shoestringcon’, in October. Novacon 15, escaping the gravitational black hole of Birmingham for Coventry with guests Dave Langford and James White, found itself clashing with Cymrucon '85, but the latter, already rescheduled a couple of times, was eventually abandoned and shunted off to the far distant 1988 where, so far as I can tell, it never happened either.

February 1986 saw the second Mexican, taking on Novacon's old home of the Royal Angus in Birmingham and drawing an impressive roster of professional writers including William Gibson and Iain Banks. This was Banks's first convention; less promisingly, it was also mine. Eastercon went back to Glasgow for Albacon III and a piece of numerology that seemingly ignored the two non-Eastercon Albacons which would otherwise make it Albacon V. This had been another contested bid in the ‘Eastercon Wars’, with Albacon, representing the new-style convention, winning over the old guard Contravention bid for Birmingham. Voting had been close, with a recount giving the victory to Albacon by a margin of five votes. Clive Barker, Joe Haldeman, John Jarrold and Pete Lyon were the guests, and Nick Mahoney enthused about the event in the pages of *Matrix* #65: “Throughout the whole convention I felt at home almost to the point of becoming an extrovert ... I came home vibrant with ideas”.

There was the usual run of summer events: the first of the Brecon relaxacons in Hay-on-Wye in June; Mythcon in Nottingham (with Marion Zimmer Bradley) and the Brum Group's birthday Fifteencon in July; Consept, the seventh Unicon, in Guildford in August (Tanith Lee); and, claiming the Silicon slot and some of its ideology, Rubicon in Newbury for the August bank holiday weekend. Glasgow had XIIcon in September (the twelfth convention in that city), with Harry

Harrison, and Fantasycon XI was back in Birmingham the same month. And, at last, Nicon '86 gave Northern Ireland its first sf convention, with guest Anne McCaffrey. Finally, Novacon 16 returned to Coventry, with Ted Tubb and Chris Evans and the lowest attendance since 1974.

From that dip, British fandom started 1987 in celebratory mood with February's Conception in Leeds marking 50 years since the 'first ever sf con' (I am less didactic than Peter on this point), which had also been held in Leeds. Becon '87 was a step up from its three predecessors, being the 1987 Eastercon. Its venue (next to the National Exhibition Centre in Solihull) made it the first Eastercon outside the Brighton / Glasgow / Leeds circuit since 1978. Guests were Chris Atkinson, Jane Gaskell and Keith Roberts and the first Arthur C Clarke Award was presented (to Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale*). Dave Langford (*Ansible* #50) felt it polarised opinions, and Paul Kincaid's review in *Matrix* #70 represents one of these pole,s but I will maintain an air of mystery by not telling you which one. From an Eastercon wonk's standpoint, the convention was notable for a failed attempt to introduce an Eastercon charter and a successful shift to two-year bidding, an idea that had first been floated by Paul Oldroyd in 1984. Bidding sessions thus selected successor conventions for both 1988 and 1989.

The rest of 1987 was a little less crowded than usual. Rubicon II moved forward in the year because of the impending Worldcon juggernaut, while maintaining its Silicon-like aspect and its Newbury venue, and another Albacon brought Josephine Saxton and Brian Stableford to Glasgow in June, while Connote8 was the punning name for Unicon 8 in Cambridge in July with Geraldine Harris as GoH.

And then the really big one: August Bank Holiday weekend and Conspiracy '87, the 45th Worldcon in Brighton. Guests were Alfred Bester (regrettably unable to attend), Doris Lessing, Jim Burns, Arkady and Boris Strugatsky, Joyce and Ken Slater, Ray Harryhausen and David Langford, the longest Worldcon guest list to date. 5,400 people joined and slightly over 4,000 of them showed up, one-third up on the previous British Worldcon eight years earlier. Once again opinions were divided, and again the newer fans were less troubled by the backstage difficulties -- which they probably didn't even know about -- than the experienced attendees. There were problems with the main hotel, the Metropole, parts of which seemed to be under-

going renovation, whilst the decision to accept (rather prominent) sponsorship from the publishers behind the Writers of the Future competition was to say the least controversial. For many attendees, though, there was a packed programme, with plenty of opportunities to observe otherwise rarely-seen American writers, bid parties for exotic foreign conventions many of us never dreamed we'd see, an extravagant and (speaking as somebody who's not a fan of the form) really rather impressive masquerade, a concert by Hawkwind... really, it was difficult to be unimpressed by the scale of it.

And when it was all over, we all went back to our other fannish endeavours, which for two West Midlands fans -- Martin Tudor and the other one who everybody forgets -- included the launch of a new bimonthly news magazine called *Critical Wave*.

Its first issue, published in October 1987, led with a report that Vince Docherty and Mark Meenan were scouting out the Scottish Exhibition and Conference Centre site for a prospective Worldcon bid in the 1990s...

[Sources: As I noted, Mexicon II in 1986 was my first convention, so the vast majority of this piece is drawn from secondary sources. The first series of Dave Langford's *Ansible* conveniently documents this entire period and is online too, which makes it handy for quotes. The BSFA's *Matrix* provided listings and convention reports. Rob Hansen's *Then* only covers the period up to the end of the 1970s, but its shorter precursor *The Story So Far* does cover the period up to Conspiracy. Various other online sources provided snippets of info, as did assorted print publications, and Claire Brialey, Catherine Pickersgill, Greg Pickersgill and Roger Robinson put me right in a few places. Oh, and Peter Weston has written a book, apparently.]

Mark Plummer concludes this series with an article in the Novacon 37 Programme Book, covering the final 20-year period.

Artshow & Auctions

Once again, Novacon will be running a packed artshow, with many of the items featured in Sunday's arts and crafts auction. Among the exhibits definitely *not* for sale is Pete Lyon's original painting for the issue of *Interzone* which included the first story sold by our guest of honour, Charlie Stross (our thanks to Charlie for offering to bring that along). We'll also have our CD:ROM art display up and running. Do contact us at once if you want to exhibit your artwork.

Members can also enter items in the Novacon book auction (Saturday) and the Novacon arts & crafts auction (Sunday). We're particularly interested in your books this year. Please advise the Registrations Desk immediately upon arrival if you have items for auction. A 10% commission is charged on all sales.

Fan Fundery

Whilst there won't be a United Fan Funds auction this year (the slot we offered was unfortunately considered too late in the evening), there will be a table offering fannish esoteria for reasonable sums, as well as ample opportunities to approach 2007 TransAtlantic Fan Fund winner Bridget Bradshaw after her slideshow on Saturday morning and vote for the US sf fan you want to fly across the Big Pond next Easter.

Beer Tasting and Meal

What would our annual post-con dead dog party be without our international beer tasting? Tickets will be available at £5 each from the registrations desk, but it's far more fun if you bring along three bottles of beer instead (the more obscure, the better).

This year's post-Novacon meal has a Caribbean theme. The dishes comprise: Jerk Chicken; Curry Mutton; Peppers filled with Marjoram and pineapple risotto; White Fish, Peppers, Onion & Cajun Seasoning; Rice & Peas; Roasted Sweet & New Potatoes Fried Plantain and Mixed Vegetables; Spinach Avocado & Orange Salad; Spiced Sultana Coleslaw; Rice, Coconut & pineapple Salad; Tropical Fruit Salad with

Toffee Cream; Vanilla Cheesecake with Warm spiced Mango and Paw Paw in Malibu Syrup. Tickets will be available at Registrations.

Children's Facilities

Although - as in recent years - Novacon 37 will not be organising an official creche, we have set aside a room for younger members to amuse themselves. Please note any use of this facility will be strictly the responsibility of their parents.

Nova Awards 2007

Steve Green, Administrator

In 1973, Novacon instituted the annual Nova Awards to celebrate achievement in British sf fanzines. Originally handed down by a panel of judges, these accolades are now decided by Novacon members who can demonstrate a basic knowledge of current UK fanzines.

Following Novacon 32, the three categories - best fanzine, best fanzine writer, best fanzine artist - were extended to cover fanzines produced in Eire. In addition, electronic fanzines are now eligible, provided a hardcopy is lodged at 33 Scott Road, Solihull, B92 7LQ, UK.

The following fanzines were received between 1 October 2006 and 30 September 2007, and are eligible for the 2007 awards, which will be presented at Novacon 37:

A Cry For Help #2 [16p, A5], John Toon, 118 Great Meadow Road, Bristol, BS32 8DA

Ansible #231 [10/06], #232 [11/06], #233 [12/06], #234 [1/07], #235 [2/07], #236 [3/07], #237 [4/07], #238 [5/07], #239 [6/07], #240 [7/07], #241 [8/07], #242 [9/07; all 2pp, all A4], Dave Langford, 94 London Road, Reading, RG1 5AU

Banana Wings #28 [32pp], #29, #30, #31 [all 36pp, all A4], Claire Brialey & Mark Plummer, 59 Shirley Road, Croydon, CR0 7ES

The Banksoniain #11, #12 [both 12pp, both A5], David Haddock, 84 Foxhollow, Bar Hill, Cambridge, CB3 8ES

Brum Group News #421 [10/06], #422 [11/06, both 12pp], #423 [12/06], #424 [1/07; both 8pp], #425 [2/07], #426 [3/07], #427

[4/07], #428 [5/07, all 12pp], #429 [6/07], #430 [7/07, both 8pp; all A5], Rog Peyton (for the Birmingham Science Fiction Group); #431 [8/07, 8pp], #432 [9/07, 12pp, both A5], William McCabe (for the Birmingham Science Fiction Group)

Clues and Gropes [12pp, A5; subtitled "An Obscene Filk Collection for Eastercon 2007"], Douglas Spencer & Judith Proctor, 51 Fountains Garth, Bracknell, RG12 7RH

Fanzine Fantastique Spring 2007 [4pp, A4], Keith & Rosemary Walker, 6 Vine Street, Lancaster, LA1 4UF

Fanzine of the Teledu #1: What is Teledu?, #2: The Big Issues [8pp, A7; subtitled "A collaborative fanzine by the members of Year of the Teledu"], 14 Endsleigh Gardens, Beeston, NG9 2HJ

Gotterdammerung Redux [36pp, A5; selected material from issues #4 - #11], Tommy Ferguson

Head #7 [27pp, A4], Doug Bell & Christina Lake, 35 Gyllyng Street, Falmouth, TN11 3EL

I Knew the Porridge Was Trying to Tell Me Something [16pp, A4; subtitled "Some collected writings of Ang Rosin (for GUFF)"], Claire Brialey & Mark Plummer, 59 Shirley Road, Croydon, CR0 7ES

The League of Fan Funds Newsletter [11/06], Claire Brialey, Alison Scott, Flick.

iShoes #1 [20pp, A5], Yvonne Rowse, Evergreen, Halls Farm Lane, Trimley, DY12 1NP

Outlaw Mutation Boogie #64 [16pp, A5], Mark Plummer, 59 Shirley Road, Croydon, CR0 7ES

Phlizz #1, #2 [both CDs], Chuck Connor, 64 Chelwood Avenue, Hatfield, AL10 0RE

Plokta #36 [16pp], #37 [12pp, both A4], Steve Davies, Alison Scott & Mike Scott, 3 Sandgate Avenue, Reading, RG30 6XD

Procrastinations #2 [16pp], #3 [32pp], #4 [36pp, all A5], John Coxon, 14 Chapel Lane, Peterborough, PE4 6RS

Prolapse #3 [21pp], #4 [26pp], #5 [28pp], #6 [36pp], #7, #8 [both 40pp, all A4], Peter Weston, 53 Wyvern Road, Sutton Coldfield, B74 2PS

Snapshot #8 [6pp, A4], Ian Sorensen, 3 Portia Place, Motherwell, ML1 1EL

Tortoise #23, #24 [both 22pp, both A4], Sue Jones, Flat 5, 32-33 Castle Street, Shrewsbury, SY1 2BQ

Claire Brialey and Mark Plummer have kindly advised Novacon of the existence of several fanzines they assure me are also eligible:

Demeter's Daughter #1, #2, #3, Abi Brown

Fans Across the World Newsletter #127, Bridget Wilkinson

Foundation and Empire, Flick

Inca #2, Rob Jackson

Motorway Dreamer #3, #4, John Nielsen Hall

Pips #3, Jim Trash

Sailing North, Liam Proven

Voting forms for the 2007 Nova Awards will be available to download from the Novacon website in late October, and hardcopies will be included in the convention membership packs.

Eligible members are encouraged to vote in all three categories - best fanzine, best fan writer and best fan artist. The results will be announced on Sunday afternoon.

The full Nova rules are available at www.novacon37.org.uk.

How to get to Novacon 37

Most of you are already familiar with our venue, but just in case...

The Quality Hotel is situated on Wolverhampton Road, Willenhall, immediately off Junction 10 of the M6; it's signposted from the service road. There's ample free parking adjacent to the hotel.

The nearest mainline railway station (just under five miles away) is Walsall, a short journey from Birmingham New Street. For information on local bus, metro and train services, contact Centro on 0870 608 2608. If you'd prefer to travel from Walsall by cab, the hotel recommends Rosehill Taxis on 01902 606090.

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